

REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Approve the 2018 Sustainability Speaker Series

BACKGROUND

In June 2016, City Council approved Budget Supplement No. 7 (Attachment 1), which provided \$25,000 annually for five years to create and conduct a Sustainability Speaker Series (Speaker Series). The Speaker Series is led by the Sustainability Commission, whose specific duties include advising Council on ways to drive community awareness, education, and participation in best practices related to making Sunnyvale a more sustainable city. The approved budget supports two to four events each year. Staff provides logistical support for the events, such as coordinating speakers, identifying venues, and publicity and outreach for events. As specified in the Budget Supplement, City Council approves the series topics.

In March 2017, the Sustainability Commission formed an Ad Hoc Committee (hereafter referred to as the Subcommittee), comprised of Commissioners Kristel Wickham and Steven Zornetzer, to identify topics and plan the Speaker Series.

The inaugural 2017 Sustainability Speaker Series (2017 Series) was approved by the City Council in April 2017 (RTC No. 17-0357) and included three events on the theme of "Practical Sustainability," covering the following topics:

1. Building Electrification (Pierre Delforge, Natural Resources Defense Council)
2. Electrification of Transportation Systems (Rod Diridon, Mineta Transportation Institute)
3. Zero Waste Home (Bea Johnson, author and zero waste lifestyle expert)

These topics were aligned with and timed to coincide with roll-outs of two key City initiatives, namely the launch of Silicon Valley Clean Energy's 100-percent carbon-free electricity supply, and of FoodCycle, the City's residential food scraps collection program.

Events were held on weekday evenings between May and August 2017 in City Council Chambers. Zero waste refreshments were provided for the public. Each event was broadcasted live on K-SUN TV and available for live streaming through the City's website. Video recordings were made available through the City's website.

Each of the events drew approximately 70-130 individuals, with attendance growing at each subsequent event. The feedback provided by attendees, staff, Councilmembers in attendance, and Sustainability Commissioners was overwhelmingly positive.

EXISTING POLICY

The Speaker Series is aligned with the City's Climate Action Plan (CAP), which contains a key goal area for increasing and retaining awareness of sustainability issues.

This Series is also aligned with the Sustainability Commission's duties, which include advising the Council on ways to drive community awareness, education, and participation in best practices.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered does not constitute a "project" within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(a) as it has no potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

DISCUSSION

After research and coordination with Environmental Services Department staff, the Subcommittee presented a proposal for the 2018 Sustainability Speaker Series (2018 Series) at the September 18, 2017 Sustainability Commission meeting. The proposal contemplates four to six events, depending on the availability of staff resources, proposed speaker availability, and available budget. At this meeting, the Commission prioritized the six topics included in the Proposal (Attachment 2: 2018 Sustainability Speaker Series Proposal Report).

The Commission voted unanimously to forward the 2018 Sustainability Speaker Series Proposal with the Commission ranking to City Council for review and approval (Attachment 3). Pending City Council approval of the topics, the Commission plans to schedule the first speaker event in January 2018.

Staff has reviewed and collaborated with the Subcommittee during the development of the 2018 Series proposal and generally supports the topics selected. The Budget Supplement approved by Council specified up to four events per year, while the 2018 Series is proposed to have four to six events. Staff resources to support additional events may be limited due to parallel sustainability efforts, including the development of the updated Climate Action Plan (CAP 2.0) and its robust community engagement effort and ongoing implementation and reporting for CAP 1.0. Staff recommends approving the 2018 Series topics as proposed by the Sustainability Commission, with the proviso that implementation of up to six events in 2018 will be contingent on speaker availability, staffing resources, and available budget.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funding for 2018 Series is included in the FY 2017/2018 Adopted Budget, Project No. 832360. Additionally, \$19,000 from the FY 2016/2017 adopted budget for this project has been carried over to the current year.

An estimated \$10,500 was spent on the 2017 Series with approximately \$4,000 spent in FY 2017/2018 because two of the events occurred in August 2017.

With the carryover budget, a total of \$39,500 would be available for the 2018 Series.

Staff anticipates that the primary costs for these events will be:

- Staff time to plan and implement logistics and publicity for the events
- Speaker fees (ranging from \$0 to \$20,000)

- Publicity and advertising costs (flyers, Sunnyvale Sun newspaper ad, etc.)
- Refreshments (if donations are not secured)

Staff will continue to monitor the budget and will work with the Sustainability Commission to ensure that the proposed 2018 Series is conducted within the approved budget.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, at the Sunnyvale Senior Center, Community Center and Department of Public Safety; and by making the agenda and report available at the Sunnyvale Public Library, the Office of the City Clerk and on the City's website.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the 2018 Sustainability Speaker Series Topics as proposed by the Sustainability Commission, with the proviso that implementation of up to six events in 2018 will be contingent on speaker availability, staffing resources, and available budget.

Prepared by: Elaine Marshall, Environmental Programs Manager

Reviewed by: Melody Tovar, Interim Director of Environmental Services

Approved by: Kent Steffens, Interim City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Budget Supplement No. 7
2. 2018 Sustainability Speaker Series Proposal Report from the Sustainability Commission
3. Excerpt from Draft September 18, 2017 Sustainability Commission Meeting minutes